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EXAMINER

RUTLEDGE, AMELIA L

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

2176

DATE MAILED: 08/01/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

**Office Action Summary**

Application No.

09/998,895

Applicant(s)

TENG ET AL.

Examiner

Amelia Rutledge

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

**Period for Reply**

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

**Status**

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 27 June 2005.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

**Disposition of Claims**

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-38 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-38 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

**Application Papers**

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

**Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119**

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).  
a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
  2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
  3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- \* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

**Attachment(s)**

- 1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 3/14/05.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. \_\_\_\_\_.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_.

### DETAILED ACTION

1. This action is responsive to communications: Amendment – After Non-Final Rejection filed 06/27/2005.
2. Claims 1-38 are pending in the case. Claims 7, 8, 18, 19, 28, and 29 have been amended. Claims 34-38 have been added.

### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112***

3. The following is a quotation of the first paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall contain a written description of the invention, and of the manner and process of making and using it, in such full, clear, concise, and exact terms as to enable any person skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make and use the same and shall set forth the best mode contemplated by the inventor of carrying out his invention.

4. **Claim 38** is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the written description requirement. The claim(s) contains subject matter which was not described in the specification in such a way as to reasonably convey to one skilled in the relevant art that the inventor(s), at the time the application was filed, had possession of the claimed invention. Specifically, applicant states in the Amendment “Support for this claim can be found, inter alia, at lines 17-19 on page 47 of the application (Amendment, p. 10, l. 4-5).” However, lines 17-19 on page 47 of the application read *User Manager. Or, they must be performed by the Group Manager, etc. Figure 20 is a flowchart describing the process of using a workflow. The process of Figure 20 is performed, for example, when creating a new user, a new...* However, claim 38 cites *A method according to claim 37, wherein at least one of the first program and the second program is external to the workflow.* Neither the cited text

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from applicant's specification nor the process depicted in Figure 20 show that a program is external to the workflow. In fact, the cited text appears to be unrelated to the subject matter of claim 37. Therefore claim 37 introduces new matter and is rejected for failing to comply with the written description requirement.

### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

1. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

2. **Claims 1-37 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hardy et al. (hereinafter "Hardy"), U.S. Patent No. 6,073,242 issued June 6, 2000 in view of Howes et al. (hereinafter "Howes"), Understanding and Deploying LDAP Directory Services, copyright 1999, Netscape Communications, Macmillan Computer Publishing ISBN 1-57870-070-1.**

3. From applicant's specification, a *workflow* is understood as "a process that is implemented by the Identity System (or other system) and automates the business methods" (p. 2, l. 17-20). A *domain* is understood as "a logical grouping of Web Server host ID's, host names, URL prefixes, and rules" (p. 16, l. 5-6).

**Independent claim 1 cites:** *A method for using workflows, comprising the steps of: associating workflows with domains in a data structure, each domain identifies a portion of said data structure;*

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While Hardy teaches a method for using workflows (Col. 8, l. 41-45), Hardy does not explicitly teach the steps of associating workflows with domains in a data structure, However, Howes teaches a process of associating workflows with domains and apportioning data structures (Ch. 9, Topology Design, p. 277-292). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to combine the workflow method of Hardy with the process of Howes, so that the user would have the benefit of simplified workflow processing and control over user roles.

*receiving a request to perform a task that pertains to said data structure; and*  
Hardy teaches receiving a request to perform a task, in this case, a request to send external email (Col. 5, l. 18-21).

*performing a first workflow for said task, said first workflow is associated with a first domain that includes a target of said request.* Hardy teaches a method of performing a workflow for a task where the authority server determines the email name and key from the target domain, performs lookups, and performs steps of a workflow including appending letterhead and signature, and encryption (Col. 5, l. 15-33). Note that while this method refers to email, Hardy points out that the invention can be applied to other problems including workflow, which are similar in method to the email example and are therefore not described in depth (Col. 8, l. 43-45).

**Claim 2 cites:** *A method according to claim 1, wherein: said step of associating includes associating said first workflow with said first domain,*

Hardy teaches an authority application which coordinates communications and encompasses all applications that make use of the authorities (Col. 9, l. 35-49). While

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Hardy does not explicitly teach the step of associating the first workflow with first domain, Howes teaches a process of associating workflows with domains and apportioning data structures (Ch. 9, Topology Design, p. 277-292). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to combine the workflow method of Hardy with the process of Howes, so that the user would have the benefit of simplified workflow processing and control over user roles.

*said step of associating said first workflow includes choosing a first entry in said data structure,*

Hardy teaches a method to be applied to using workflows (Col. 8, l. 43-45) where the authority application employs the user directory to resolve user references to system references (Col. 10, l. 9-13).

*said data structure is a hierarchical data structure, said first domain includes said first entry and entries below said first entry.*

While Hardy does not explicitly teach a hierarchical data structure, Howes teaches a case study for directory services deployment where a directory is designed with a hierarchical namespace with entries below a first entry (p. 707-708). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to combine the authority application of Hardy with the hierarchical data structure taught by Howes so that the users would have the benefit of a namespace based on organizational hierarchy, to promote future extensibility of the system.

**Claim 3 cites:** *A method according to claim 2, wherein: said step of performing includes identifying one or more workflows associated with said target.*

Hardy teaches a method of identifying applications associated with the target (Col. 9, l. 35-39) and associations of classes of users with applications (Col. 10, l. 41-63).

**Claim 4 cites:** *A method according to claim 1, wherein: said request includes an identification of said target;*

Hardy teaches a process of receiving a request from a user to send external email to a destination identified by nickname, an identification of the target (Col. 5, l. 15-33).

*said step of performing includes identifying a set of one more workflows that perform said task and are associated with domains that include said target, said set of one more workflows includes said first workflow.*

Hardy teaches identifying a set of applications which make use of or authorize the enterprise authorities of the users and a server which provides client/user directory services using LDAP (Col. 9, l. 35-49). Thus the applications are associated with domains, including the target identities. Because the set of applications taught by Hardy includes all applications which make use of enterprise authorities, the set of workflows includes the first workflow.

**Claim 5 cites:** *A method according to claim 4, wherein: said request is a request to delete said target.*

While Hardy does not explicitly teach a delete request, Howes teaches a delete operation (p. 102). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to combine Hardy with Howes so that the user would have the benefit of a system with full access to operations available from the LDAP directory service and the corresponding functionality.

**Claim 6 cites:** *A method according to claim 4, wherein: said request is a request to modify said target.*

While Hardy does not explicitly teach a modify request, Howes teaches a modify operation (p. 102-105). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to combine Hardy with Howes so that the user would have the benefit of a system with full access to operations available from the LDAP directory service and the corresponding functionality.

**Amended claim 7 cites:** *A method according to claim 1, wherein: said request includes an identification of said target; and*

Hardy teaches a method which can be applied to using workflows, where the authority server receives a request with an identified target (Col. 5, l. 15-21).

*said step of performing includes the steps of: identifying a set of one more workflows that perform said task and are associated with domains that include said target, said set of one more workflows includes said first workflow,*

Hardy teaches an authority application which controls all exercise of enterprise authorities by the users, i.e., identifying a set of workflows associated with domains (Col. 9, l. 35-49).

*reporting said set of one more workflows,*

Hardy teaches the use of databases which in response to a request by a user asking the authority application to perform a particular communication or transaction, the application determines the user's role and then processes the transaction in accordance with enterprise policy (Col. 11, l. 48-64). Hardy teaches a user data structure employed



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by the directory service to map user references to system references (Col. 13, l. 14-44), i.e., reporting a set of workflows available to the user identity.

*receiving **from a user** a selection of said first workflow, and performing one or more steps of said first workflow.* Hardy teaches an example of the workflow method where the selection of the first workflow is received, and one or more steps are performed (Col. 13, l. 24-44). Hardy teaches receiving a selection of a workflow requested by a user in claim 1 (Col. 21, l. 66-Col. 22, l. 11), and further lists the set of workflows in claim 12. Hardy also teaches that a user can delegate authorities and roles to other users (Col. 4, l. 52-56), thus selecting the workflows available for access.

**Claim 8 cites:** *A method according to claim 1, wherein: said step of performing includes identifying workflows for said task, identifying domains associated with said workflows for said task, and receiving **from a user** a selection of said first workflow.* Hardy teaches a method of identifying applications associated with the task (Col. 9, l. 35-39) and associations of classes of users with applications, i.e., domains (Col. 10, l. 41-63). These applications require the intercession of the authority application, i.e., receiving a selection of said first workflow.

Hardy teaches receiving a selection of a workflow requested by a user in claim 1 (Col. 21, l. 66-Col. 22, l. 11), and further lists the set of workflows in claim 12. Hardy also teaches that a user can delegate authorities and roles to other users (Col. 4, l. 52-56), thus selecting the workflows available for access.

**Claim 9 cites:** *A method according to claim 1, wherein: said steps of associating, receiving and performing are performed by an integrated identity and*

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*access system.*

Hardy teaches an authority server that supports the implementation of role-based enterprise policies for expressing and exercising authority and the projection and transfer of those authorities over networks of communicating electronic systems (Col. 3, l. 23-37).

**Claim 10 cites:** *A method according to claim 1, wherein: said request is for self-registration.*

Hardy teaches a method of self-registration for external users (Col. 14, l. 26-61).

**Claim 11 cites:** *A method according to claim 1, wherein: said request is from a parent workflow; and said first workflow is a sub-workflow to said parent workflow.*

Hardy teaches a method of using workflows, an example of the method where an email application attaches an indication to an outgoing email message (Col. 10, l. 1-13). The email application is the parent workflow, the attachment function is a sub-workflow to the parent workflow.

**Claim 12 cites:** *A method according to claim 1, wherein: said data structure is a hierarchical data structure; and each domain identifies an entry in said hierarchical data structure and additional entries below said entry.*

While Hardy does not explicitly teach a hierarchical data structure, Howes teaches a case study for directory services deployment where a directory is designed with a hierarchical namespace with entries below a first entry (p. 707-708). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to combine the authority application of Hardy with the hierarchical data structure taught by Howes so

that the users would have the benefit of a namespace based on organizational hierarchy, to promote future extensibility of the system.

**Claim 13 cites:** *A method according to claim 12, wherein: said hierarchical data structure includes an LDAP directory.*

Howe teaches the case study for directory services deployment utilizing a hierarchical data structure in the book Understanding and Deploying LDAP Directory Services, and it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention that the hierarchical data structure included an LDAP directory.

**In regard to independent claim 14**, claim 14 reflects the processor readable storage device(s) having processor readable code used to perform the method as claimed in claim 1, and is rejected along the same rationale.

**In regard to dependent claims 15-23**, claims 15-23 reflect the processor readable storage device(s) having processor readable code used to perform the method as claimed in claims 2, 3, 4, 7-9, 11-13, and are rejected along the same rationale.

**In regard to independent claim 24**, claim 24 reflects the apparatus used to perform the method as claimed in claim 1, and is rejected along the same rationale.

**Claim 26 cites:** *An apparatus according to claim 25, wherein: said step of performing includes identifying one or more workflows associated with said target and entries in said hierarchical data structure that are above said target.*

Hardy teaches a method of identifying applications associated with the target (Col. 9, l. 35-39) and associations of a target with applications (Col. 10, l. 41-63). Hardy teaches

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requests by a lower level authority server for access to system resources controlled at a higher level (Col. 21, l. 19-43).

**In regard to dependent claims 25, 27-33**, claims 25, 27-33 reflect the apparatus used to perform the method as claimed in claims 2, 4, 7-9, 11-13, and are rejected along the same rationale.

**New claim 34 cites:** *A method according to claim 1, wherein said target is a target identity profile, and wherein said task comprises managing said target identity profile.*

Hardy teaches that each user has an identity profile, including a name or other identifier, roles, authorities, a key or certificate, and a directory (Col. 7, l. 43-59). Hardy teaches receiving a selection of a workflow requested by a user in claim 1 (Col. 21, l. 66-Col. 22, l. 11), and further lists the set of workflows in claim 12. Hardy also teaches that a user can delegate authorities and roles to other users (Col. 4, l. 52-56), thus selecting the workflows available for access and managing target identity profiles.

**New claim 35 cites:** *A method according to claim 34, wherein managing said identity profile comprises one or more tasks selected from the group consisting of: creating a user, deleting a user, changing a user attribute, creating a group, deleting a group, and changing a group attribute.*

Hardy teaches an embodiment which includes an information manager that enables each user, or system administrator, to update and maintain the role, key, and address book information maintained in the server and to delegate and transfer authorities, i.e., creating a user, changing a user attribute (Col. 5, l. 42-46).

**New claim 36 cites:** *A method according to claim 34, wherein managing said identity profile comprises managing a certificate associated with said identity profile.*

Hardy teaches the use of certificates, and the mapping of authority references, i.e., names, to the certificates (Col. 4, l. 23-36).

**New claim 37 cites:** *A method according to claim 1, wherein: said first workflow comprises a predefined set of steps that perform said task, said predefined set of steps comprising a first step and a second step; said first step is performed by a first program; said second step is performed by a second program; and information is passed between said first program and said second program according to a defined set of rules.*

Hardy teaches a rules database that defines workflow procedures and authorized roles permitted to perform respective steps of the workflow procedures (Claim 45), i.e., a *predefined set of steps and defined set of rules*. For example, Hardy teaches the workflow steps required to cut a check, pay payroll, etc. (Col. 20, l. 1-4). Hardy teaches user applications run by a user such as web browsers, word processors, spreadsheets, and e-mail program; these applications are the originators of request that give rise to intervention by the authority application (Col. 13, l. 1-10), that is, the information is passed between these programs according to the defined set of rules in the rules database, which is part of the authority application. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention that the rules database that defines workflow procedures, steps, and rules could be used to define steps that would be performed by multiple application programs, and the information passed between those programs.

***Response to Arguments***

4. Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 7, 8, 18, 19, 28, and 29 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection. The newly applied prior art (Hardy) teaches the newly claimed limitation "receiving from a user a selection of said first work flow."

5. Applicant's arguments filed 06/27/2005 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

6. In response to applicant's argument that there is no suggestion to combine the references, the examiner recognizes that obviousness can only be established by combining or modifying the teachings of the prior art to produce the claimed invention where there is some teaching, suggestion, or motivation to do so found either in the references themselves or in the knowledge generally available to one of ordinary skill in the art. See *In re Fine*, 837 F.2d 1071, 5 USPQ2d 1596 (Fed. Cir. 1988) and *In re Jones*, 958 F.2d 347, 21 USPQ2d 1941 (Fed. Cir. 1992). In this case, both applications are directed toward directory services. Further, the Hardy patent teaches an authority server that uses directory services. Howes discloses the step-by-step methods of applying directory services because Howes is a textbook. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to combine the two references since both were published and publicly available at the time of the invention.

7. Applicant argues, regarding claim 1, that Howes does not teach *associating workflows with domains in a data structure* because the cited portion of Howes does not mention the words "workflow" or "domain". However, Applicant defines in the

specification a *workflow* as “a process that is implemented by the Identity System (or other system) and automates the business methods” (p. 2, l. 17-20). That is, a workflow is *any* process implemented by *any* system that automates business methods. Using the definition supplied by the applicant, Howes discloses numerous workflow processes, such as authentication, authorization, and messaging applications (p. 279-280) which automate business methods, such as passing messages. Howes discloses detailed methods of associating these workflow processes with domains in a directory data structure.

A *domain* is defined in Applicant's specification as “a logical grouping of Web Server host ID's, host names, URL prefixes, and rules” (p. 16, l. 5-6). Howes discloses such a logical grouping of host ID's, host names, URL prefixes, and rules in Figures 9.14 *A Network Topology Map Showing the Location of Arius's Directory Enabled Applications*, and 9.15 *Arius's namespace design* (p. 286-287) as well as in the previously cited text. Therefore Howes does teach the limitation of claim 1.

8. In response to applicant's arguments against the references individually, one cannot show nonobviousness by attacking references individually where the rejections are based on combinations of references. See *In re Keller*, 642 F.2d 413, 208 USPQ 871 (CCPA 1981); *In re Merck & Co.*, 800 F.2d 1091, 231 USPQ 375 (Fed. Cir. 1986).

Applicant argues that Hardy does not teach performing a workflow because Hardy states that the invention can be applied to a workflow in a method similar to the detailed e-mail example of the disclosure (Col. 8, l. 41-45) but does not discuss the

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workflow implementation in detail. The examiner respectfully disagrees. While the examiner cited this passage to clarify to the applicant that the processes disclosed by Hardy in the e-mail example would be similarly applied to the workflow implementation, the passage should not be interpreted as stating that Hardy does not teach performing a workflow. Hardy does teach an authority server to be used with workflows. The method of applying the invention to workflows would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention, because the authority server would be applied to workflows using the same methods that are explained in the detailed description, as disclosed by Hardy in the cited passage (Col. 8, l. 41-45). The implementation of workflow processes is disclosed throughout the Hardy patent as claimed in claim 45, described in the statement that the objective of the invention is to provide simplified workflow processing (Col. 3, l. 18-19), provided in the listing of typical workflow applications (Col. 10, l. 50-63), etc.

Applicant's arguments regarding the dependent claims are generally based on the fact that Hardy and Howe do not use the specific word "workflow". However, based on applicant's definitions as cited above, Hardy and Howe do teach workflow processes. Further, applicant mischaracterizes multiple passages of Hardy cited in the office action by pointing out that Hardy does not use exactly the same words to describe the disclosed invention as used by the applicant in the claims. However, Hardy does teach the limitations of the claims and the meaning of the cited passages would have been conceptually equivalent to the claim language used, for one of ordinary skill in the art.



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In regard to claims 9 and 20, in response to applicant's argument that the references fail to show certain features of applicant's invention (Amendment, p. 14, par. 2), it is noted that the features upon which applicant relies (i.e., Specification, p. 9, l. 8-12) are not recited in the rejected claim(s). Although the claims are interpreted in light of the specification, limitations from the specification are not read into the claims. See *In re Van Geuns*, 988 F.2d 1181, 26 USPQ2d 1057 (Fed. Cir. 1993).

### ***Conclusion***

9. Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.


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Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Amelia Rutledge whose telephone number is 571-272-7508. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday - Friday 9:30 - 6:00.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Heather Herndon can be reached on 571-272-4136. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

AR

  
WILLIAM BASHORE  
PRIMARY EXAMINER  
7/28/2005